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ABSTRACT)

This paper describes a simulation experience to help people understand the feelings of the elderly through a program conducted by the Jewish Center for Aged in Chesterfield, MO. The four-hour program is divided into four sections: (1) a true-false test is given to assess participants' concepts of the aged: (2) inhibitors are applied to limit vision, hearing, touch, dexterity and mobility: (3) 12 tasks involving reading, writing, moving, mental stimulation, isolation, eating, exercise, medication, and recreation are assigned to be performed with inhibitors in place: and (4) inhibitors are removed for a discussion period. The format for the simulation activity is reviewed, required materials are listed, and the procedure is outlined. Topics suggested for discussion include assessing the feelings of the participants during the simulation and developing intervention strategies to help the elderly. Forms used in the program are also included. (NRB)

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A SIMULATION EXPERIENCE TO SENSITIZE PERSONS TO THE SENSORY LOSSES OF THE ELDERLY

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JEWISH CENTER FOR AGED

Department of Education

A Simulation Experience to Sensitize Persons to the Sensory Losses of the Elderly

One of the most effective programs in helping a person understand the feelings of the elderly person is a simulation experience. For the past two years the JCA Department of Education has conducted this program for 6-10 persons each month.

For a four hour period the participants are inhibited in their dexterity, mobility, visual, hearing, and tactile abilities. Before inhibitors are applied, a True/False test is given to assess participants' concept of the aged. Twelve tasks are assigned to be performed with inhibitors in place. The tasks involve reading, writing, moving from one area to another, mental stimulation, isolation, eating, exercise, medication, and recreation. At the conclusion inhibitors are removed and discussion shared regarding feelings of participant during experience and methods of appropriate intervention to assist the elderly to function at the highest level possible.

After experiencing lessened sensory perceptions of the aged the participants are able to offer more sensitive, empathic and competent care to the elderly person.

JEWISH CENTER FOR AGED
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A SIMULATION EXPERIENCE TO SENSITIZE PERSONS TO THE SENSORY LOSSES OF THE ELDERLY.

This four hour program is designed to assist people in understanding the feelings of an elderly person who has experienced losses of vision, hearing, touch, dexterity and mobility.

The methods used include; (1) a true-false quiz to assess the participants concept of the aged; (2) application of inhibitors to limit vision, hearing, touch, dexterity and mobility; (3) assignment of twelve (12) tasks to be performed with inhibitors in place; (4) discussion period covering the feelings of participant during experience and methods of appropriate intervention to assist the elderly to function at highest possible level.

The results of this experience are an increased awareness of the frustrations, loneliness and irritability of the elderly by the participants. This program has been conducted at the Jewish Center for Aged monthly for over two years. 80 Staff, Board, Auxiliary and interested community members have participated in the program. All those involved in the program have shown more positive attitudes and an increased understanding in their interactions with the elderly.

I SET UP FOR SIMULATION EXPERIENCE

One staff member to conduct program. Ideal number of participants is eight, minimum of four. Ideal time frame is four hours. Participants do not adequately experience the problems of the elderly, if less than four hours is allotted for the program. It is important to assign tasks in rotation to avoid conflicting activities and to require participant to manuever short distances through door ways and around stationary objects. Two rooms and a hall way are ideal. Task numbered signs are posted in appropriate areas. If space and time permit, a resident room could be utilized and tasks include restrained for 15 minutes in a bed raised to a 45 degree angle with raised side rails, seated on commode for 15 minutes and brushing teeth at vanity while seated in a wheel chair.

II

8-True-False Quizes
8-Application Blanks
8-Cross word puzzles
3-Large eyed sewing needles
8-Buttons
8-Pieces of fabric
1-Spool Thread
1-Scissors
Dog Food
Plastic wrap
4-Wheel chairs
4-Walkers
3-Shower chairs and bath blankets
8-Pair of dark glasses
1-Jar of vaseline
4-Rolls 3" wide guaze
8-Pair ear plugs or cotton
8-Pair rubber gloves
8-Padded splints (12" in length)
3-Rolls masking tape
1-Master assignment schedule
1-Deck playing cards
8-Score sheets
1-Large print short story
8-Pencils
1-Telephone & note pad
Paper
Candy pills
16-Medicine cups
16-Drinking cups
8-Chairs
1-Large table
8-Lunch trays & silverware

III Procedure:

1. Explanation of purpose of program to participants.
2. True-False Quiz [1] (Form A) - to be self corrected and discussed at conclusion. Initial for identification.
3. Application of inhibitors.

   A. Dark glasses which have been coated with vaseline and gauze wrapped around glasses to simulate decreased visual acuity.
   B. Cotton or ear plugs in both ears to simulate decreased audio perception.
   C. Rubber gloves on both hands to simulate decreased sense of touch. Masking tape wrapped around fingers to simulate decreased dexterity.
   D. Padded splint on elbow or knee joint to simulate decreased mobility.
   E. Wheel chair or walker assigned to each participant.

4. Assignment of Tasks.

   Each participant receives a personal Task List (See Form B) Specific time frame given for card game (15 minutes), exercise group (10 minutes), receiving medication two times (5 minutes each) and lunch (20 minutes).

5. Tasks include

   A. Sitting in a shower chair wrapped in a bath blanket for 15 minutes.
   B. Getting dressed and undressed independently in 15 minutes in slip, dress, hose & shoes for women - shirt, pants, belt, socks and shoes for men.
   C. Completing cross word puzzle (see Form C) in 10 minutes.
   D. Threading a needle and sewing a button on a piece of fabric in 10 minutes.
   E. Sitting on a hard chair on which there is a mass of wet dog food sealed in plastic in an isolated corner for 10 minutes.
   F. Read a large print story and write a summary, 15 minute time allotted.
   G. Dial telephone to receive local time and temperature. Write information on paper and initial. 5 minutes time allotted.
   H. Complete application in ten minutes (Form D)

6. Following lunch inhibitors are removed. Discussion of feelings of participants during experience is facilitated by leader. Participants are encouraged to express frustrations in completing tasks. Score sheet (Form E) is completed and discussed. True-False quiz is reviewed and discussed.
   Intervention techniques are discussed to lessen and prevent the problems of frustration, loneliness, irritability and isolation encountered by the elderly person.

[1]True-False Quiz adapted with permission from Sensitizing People to the Process of Aging: The In-Service Educator's Guide by Marvin Ernst, Ph.D. and Herbert Shore, Ed. D., publisher University Center for Community Services, Center for Studies on Agin, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203.

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SIMULATION TRUE-FALSE QUIZ

VISION

T F Cataracts are common among older people.

T F The older a person becomes, the poorer his eyesight.

T F Glasses can always help an older person see better.

T F Accidents can be related to vision problems in older people.

T F Older people see duller colors better than do younger people.

T F Many experts feel that the lens of the eye yellows with age.

HEARING

T F If an older person is hard of hearing, you should speak louder so that he can hear you.

T F If a person has a hearing aid, he can usually hear what you are saying.

T F Having a person read your lips as you talk helps him to understand what you are saying.

T F If a person who is hard of hearing does not see you, you should find some way to let him know you are in the room.

T F An older person usually knows if he has a hearing problem.

T F Hearing loss frequently occurs in both ears.

TACTILE

T F Touching a person helps him to understand what you are saying.

T F Most older people do not like to be touched.

T F Older people sometimes develop blisters on their feet without noticing them.

T F Many times burns are caused because older people do not notice the heat until it is too late.

T F Strokes, arthritis, and Parkinson's disease can all affect a person's ability to hold or to feel objects.

T F If a person has lost his touch perception, there is little that a nursing home staff can do to help him.

DEXTERITY

T F Older people may spill their coffee because they cannot grip the cup.

T F Counting change is very easy for older people.

T F Threading a needle takes a lot of coordination.

T F Few older people suffer from decreased ability to hold objects.

T F If a person has difficulty dressing himself or feeding himself, it is better for someone to go ahead and do it for him in order to save time.

T F A person with dexterity problems finds small objects easier to handle than large objects.

TASTE

T F A person's appetite changes throughout his life.

T F Older people often use more salt on their food than they did when they were younger.

T F Salty food can be harmful to an older person.

T F Older people often complain about the way food tastes.

T F Older people can taste sweets better than other foods.

T F If a person must be fed by another person, it does not really matter to him what he is eating.

SMELL

T F Body odor is a common problem among older people.

T F The ability to smell odors does not change with age.

T F Older people can smell smoke as well as anyone.

T F Smell is important to the taste of food.

T F Older people do not notice bad odors as quickly as other people.

T F When working around older people, staff should wear strong perfume or shaving lotion so that the older person can smell it.

MOBILITY AND BALANCE

T F Most older people will end up in a wheelchair.

T F Falling down is a big problem for older people.

T F Joints which are not used tend to get stiff.

T F Younger people have dizzy spells more often than older people.

T F The major reason that older people walk slowly is that they cannot think very well.

T F Some medications can affect a person's mobility and balance.

GENERAL

T F An older person can still contribute to society.

T F A person is old when he has reached age sixty-five.

T F All people sixty years old are in the same physical condition.

T F As people get older they become less intelligent.

T F Most older people live in hospitals, nursing homes, homes for the aged, or other institutions.

T F Most older people are interested in learning new things when they are given the chance.

PERSONAL TASK LIST NAME_____

Perform the tasks in order. The directions for each are on the Master Task List. Pay attention to those tasks which have some time limits. Your schedule for the tasks which occur at specific times is listed first. When it is time for you to perform those tasks, complete what you are doing and go to whatever is scheduled. At the end of each task, score yourself using the score sheet provided.

SCHEDULED TASKS

*_____Play a game of cards, i.e. Hearts, Rummy, for 10 Minutes. Keep score.

*_____Take part in the exercise for 10 minutes.

*_____It's time for your medication. Go to the aide.

*_____Eat your lunch.

TASKS IN ORDER

Begin with task # _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

easy

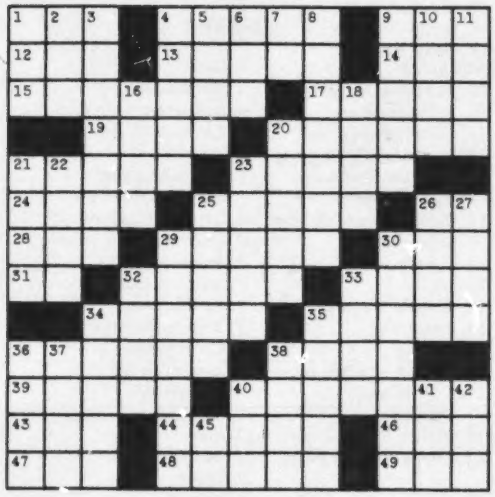
8

ACROSS

1. Uncle —, patriotic figure
4. Daisylike flower
9. Steal from
12. Fruit drink
13. New England State
14. Actress Gardner
15. Word with meter or stamp
17. Caverns
19. Talk back to
20. Tawny zoo animals
21. Shuts forcefully, as a door
23. Traveler's "home"
24. Gigantic
25. Fence openings
26. Fro's partner
28. Mine product
29. Doughnut centers
30. Pull by a rope
31. You and I
32. Canoes
33. Ringlet
34. Upright supports
35. Dull people
36. Fires (a gun)
38. Boxer's blow
39. Sticky mixture
40. Main meals
43. Malt beverage
44. Push rudely
46. Shrill bark
47. Fishing pole
48. Locations
49. Timid

DOWN

1. Tree fluid
2. Bustling excitement
3. Communication
4. Accumulate
5. Droops
6. Stalemate
7. — masse, all together
8. Says from memory
9. Become unwoven, as yarn
10. Finished
11. Game fish
16. Gentle; docile
18. Grows old
20. Carries; hauls
21. Exhibit
22. Entice
23. Comes to a stop
25. Butting animals
26. Ripped
27. "Hooters"
29. Party giver
30. Thanksgiving birds
32. Overshoe
33. Ring-tailed animal, for short
34. Sat for an artist
35. Dog's "treasures"
36. Box, as in a practice session
37. Angelic headwear
38. Bee's home
40. Speck
41. Fan's cheer
42. Secret agent
45. Casual greeting



Solution is on page 59

APPLICATION FORM

NAME _____ AGE _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____

WEIGHT: _____ HEIGHT _____ EYE COLOR _____

SPOUSE'S NAME: _____

CHILDREN: _____

INTERESTS:

SCORE SHEET

After you perform each task, score yourself on it. In evaluating your performance, keep in mind your normal level of functioning. Put a check mark next to the task number for the tasks which you required assistance. A score of 5 indicates excellent performance, 4 is above average, 3 is adequate, 2 is less than adequate but you are marginally functional, 1 is poor, and 0 is for those tasks which you were unable to perform or complete. Circle your score for each task.

Regualar tasks

#	Unable to Complete	Poor	Marginal	Adequate	Above Average	Excellent
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12						
13.						

Special Tasks

* 1.						
* 2.						
* 3.						
* 4.						

Notes